

Message Text

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EPA PLEASE PASS TO DR. JACK THOMPSON

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SENV ECE XG US NO
SUBJ: OSLO AIR POLLUTION CONFERENCE OUTLINES EUROPEAN
MONITORING PROGRAM

REF: (A) STATE 268049 (B) OSLO 5113 (C) STATE 257112

SUMMARY: REPRESENTATIVES OF 17 COUNTRIES MET IN
OSLO IN EARLY DECEMBER AT THE REQUEST OF NORWAY
AND AGREED ON A TECHNICAL OUTLINE FOR AN INTER-
NATIONAL COOPERATIVE PROGRAM FOR MONITORING AND
EVALUATING THE LONG RANGE TRANSMISSION OF AIR
POLLUTION IN EUROPE. IF ACCEPTED, AND IMPLEMENTED
BY GOVERNMENTS, THE PROGRAM WOULD FLOW FROM CSCE
PROPOSALS FOR EAST-WEST ENVIRONMENTAL COOPERATION
AND WOULD BE UNDERTAKEN WITHIN THE ECE
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FRAMEWORK. NORWAY PLANS TO PRESENT THE OUTLINE SOON
TO THE ECE AND TO TAKE STEPS TO ENCOURAGE BROADER
SUPPORT FOR THE PROGRAM. THERE ARE AT THIS STAGE
BENEFITS FOR US PARTICIPATION AND ENCOURAGEMENT
IN FURTHER DEVELOPING THE PROGRAM. END SUMMARY

1. SOME 50 REPRESENTATIVES FROM 17 COUNTRIES AND FIVE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS MET IN OSLO DECEMBER 3-7 AND AGREED ON A BROAD OUTLINE FOR A PROPOSED INTERNATIONAL COOPERATIVE PROGRAM FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATING THE LONG RANGE TRANSMISSION OF AIR POLLUTANTS IN EUROPE. MEETING WAS CALLED BY NORWAY AS PART OF A PROJECT TO BE IMPLEMENTED WITHIN FRAMEWORK OF CONFERENCE ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE (CSCE).

2. EXPERTS FROM WESTERN COUNTRIES INCLUDED AUSTRIA, BELGIUM, CANADA, DENMARK, FTG, FINLAND, FRANCE, ITALY, THE NETHERLANDS, NORWAY, SWEDEN, SWITZERLAND, TURKEY, UK AND US, WHICH WAS REPRESENTED BY DR. JACK THOMPSON OF EPA AND EMBOFF MANSFIELD. SPAIN DID NOT TAKE PART BECAUSE OF DELEGATE ILLNESS. FROM THE EAST CAME POLAND AND LATER HUNGARY, WHILE REGRETS AND EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST WERE SENT FROM THE USSR, CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND THE COUNCIL FOR MUTUAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE (CMEA). INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS PARTICIPATING INCLUDED UNEP, ECE, OECD, WMO, WHO AND CEC. NORWEGIAN ENVIRONMENT MINISTER GRO HARLEM BRUNDTLAND OPENED CONFERENCE AND NORWEGIAN DELEGATE ERIK LYKKE SERVED AS CHAIRMAN.

3. AFTER BROAD GENERAL DISCUSSION OF LONG-RANGE AIR POLLUTION TRANSMISSION PROBLEM, NEED FOR IMPROVED INFORMATION ON POLLUTANT EMISSIONS AND EFFECTS, EXPERTS AGREED GENERALLY UPON THE NEED FOR DEVELOPING EUROPEAN AIR POLLUTION MONITORING AND EVALUATION NETWORK TO ASSIST IN UNDERSTANDING AND DEALING WITH PROBLEMS. FRENCH DELEGATION ONLY RESERVED ITS POSITION SAYING CONFERENCE WAS PREMATURE AND THAT FRENCH PREFERRED TO AWAIT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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CONCLUSION OF OECD AIR POLLUTANT STUDY TO DETERMINE IF THERE REALLY WAS A LONG RANGE TRANSMISSION PROBLEM.

4. DRAWING UPON NORWEGIAN DRAFT, EXPERTS OUTLINED GENERAL APPROACH AND BASIC ELEMENTS OF TECHNICAL MONITORING AND EVALUATION PROGRAM INCLUDING POLLUTANT MEASUREMENT NETWORK, EMISSION SURVEYS, METEOROLOGICAL DATA COLLECTION AND ATMOSPHERIC DISPERSION MODELS. THEY AGREED THAT FIRST NEED WAS TO INVESTIGATE SULFUR TRANSMISSION AND RESULTANT ACID PRECIPITATION AND LATER MOVE ON TO OTHER POLLUTANTS SUCH AS NITROGEN OXIDES, ORGANIC CON-

POUNDS, PHOTOCHEMICAL OXIDANTS AND HARMFUL METALS.

5. EXPERTS AGREED PROGRAM SHOULD BE BUILT ON NATIONAL MEASUREMENTS, STANDARDIZED AND COMPARABLE, WHICH WOULD HAVE TO BE COLLECTED, COORDINATED AND EVALUATED BY A CENTRAL UNIT AND PROGRAM DIRECTED BY STEERING COMMITTEE OF PARTICIPANTS. THEY INDICATED THAT SERVICES OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, SUCH AS WMO, SHOULD BE EMPLOYED, AND THAT THE PROGRAM COULD BECOME A PART OF THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING SYSTEM OF UNEP. THERE WAS GENERAL AGREEMENT ON BOTH TECHNICAL (NEED FOR POLLUTANT INFORMATION) AND POLITICAL GROUNDS (NEED TO INSPIRE EAST-WEST COOPERATION) THAT THE PROGRAM SHOULD BE CONDUCTED UNDER ECE.

6. PARTICIPANTS AGREED TO PRESENT THE DRAFT TECHNICAL PROGRAM TO THEIR GOVERNMENTS FOR CONSIDERATION. NORWAY OFFERED TO PROVIDE NORWEGIAN INSTITUTE FOR AIR RESEARCH (HEADED BY DIRECTOR DR. B. OTTAR) AS PROVISIONAL COORDINATING BODY FOR ANY ONGOING TECHNICAL CONSULTATIONS ON THE PROJECT AND LATER, IF AGREED, TO DEVELOP ADDITIONAL DETAILS OF PROJECT. NORWAY ALSO OFFERED TO HOST ANOTHER MEETING OF EXPERTS ON PROJECT IN OSLO AT LATER AGREED DATE.

7. NORWEGIANS NOW PLAN TO PRODUCE FINAL REPORT
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OF CONFERENCE RESULTS AND INTRODUCE IT IN EITHER JANUARY WORKING PARTY OF ECE SENIOR ADVISORS OR THE FEBRUARY ECE SENIOR ADVISORS MEETING WITH A VIEW TO OBTAINING ECE GENERAL ENDORSEMENT OF THE PROGRAM AND AGREEMENT TO FURTHER DEVELOP PLAN'S

DETAILS. THEY MAY ASK ECE TO AGREE THAT NORWEGIANS MIGHT CALL TOGETHER A TASK FORCE IN THE FALL, WHICH WOULD CONSIST OF A SMALL GROUP INCLUDING HOPEFULLY MORE EASTERN EUROPEANS, TO DEVELOP PROGRAM DETAILS, WHICH ECE SENIOR ADVISORS MIGHT THEN ACCEPT IN THEIR SPRING 1976 MEETING AS OFFICIAL ECE PROJECT. BROUGHT ALONG IN THIS WAY, THE PROJECT COULD, IF IT IS SUPPORTED BY NECESSARY GOVERNMENTS, PICK UP MOMENTUM FOR THE CONCLUDING CSCE DISCUSSIONS AND BE ONE OF THE FIRST PROJECTS TO ARISE FROM AND BE UNDERTAKEN WITHIN THAT FRAMEWORK.

8. EVEN WITH ALL TECHNICAL DETAILS IN ORDER, PROGRAM WILL FACE SOME DIFFICULTIES. WHILE WESTERN GOVERNMENTAL PARTICIPATION WAS WELL ABOVE EXPECTATION, THE NORWEGIANS WERE DISAP-

POINTED AT THE NUMBER OF EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES REPRESENTED. THE POLES AND HUNGARIANS WERE INVITED BY THE NORWEGIAN PRIME MINISTER DURING A RECENT OFFICIAL VISIT. EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST FROM OTHERS WERE SALUATORY, BUT IT IS CLEAR THAT FULL PARTICIPATION BY OTHER EASTERN EUROPEANS WILL BE NEEDED IF PROGRAM IS REALLY TO BE SUCCESSFUL.

9. MOREOVER, EVEN AMONG WESTERN DELEGATIONS ENTHUSIASM RANGED FROM HIGH AMONG THE SCANDINAVIANS WHO ARE RECIPIENTS OF ACID RAIN, IN PARTICULAR, TO THE UK AND FRG, WHO ARE THE SOURCES, TO THE FRENCH, WHO WERE PLEASANTLY NEGATIVE. UK DELEGATE DR. L.E. REED, WHO CHAIRS OECD AIR POLLUTION STUDY, PLAYED A CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE IN CONFERENCE BUT ADMITTED PRIVATELY THAT HE WAS NOT SURE HIS INTEREST IN THE UNDERTAKING WAS SHARED BY HIS GOVERNMENT. IT IS CLEAR THEN THAT POLLUTION SOURCE GOVERNMENTS MAY NEED SOME ENCOURAGEMENT AND THAT CSCE MOMENTUM MAY BE REQUIRED TO LAUNCH THE PROPOSAL.

10. ADDITIONALLY, THE MEETING DID NOT GO INTO
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PROJECT COSTS, WHICH COULD BE SIZEABLE. EVEN THOUGH MUCH OF THE WORK WOULD INITIALLY DRAW UPON ONGOING ACTIVITIES WITHIN EXISTING NATIONAL PROGRAMS, IT IS LIKELY THAT THE PROJECT WOULD GENERATE ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURES. THE COORDINATING UNIT WHICH WOULD RECEIVE AND PROCESS THE MONITORING INPUTS MIGHT WELL RUN UP AN ANNUAL EXPENSE OF DOLS 200,000 ACCORDING TO ESTIMATES, THE NORWEGIANS MIGHT BE WILLING TO BEAR A GOOD PART OF THESE COSTS BY USING THEIR INSTITUTE OF AIR RESEARCH. BUT EXPENSE COULD BE A HANDICAP IN A TIME OF GOVERNMENTAL FISCAL DIFFICULTIES, PARTICULARLY FOR THE POLLUTION SOURCE COUNTRIES.

11. FINALLY, DIFFICULTY COULD COME UP OVER DIFFERING VIEWS OF DURATION OF PROJECT. SCANDINAVIANS CLEARLY SEE THIS AS LONG RANGE ACTIVITY TO PROVIDE CONTINUING MONITORING INFORMATION PERHAPS TO GLOBAL UN NETWORK WHICH MIGHT GO INTO LATER PHASES OF POLLUTION CONTROL STEPS, WHEREAS UK DELEGATION SOUGHT TO EMPHASIZE THAT THIS WOULD BE A STUDY OF LIMITED TIME WHICH HAD NO CONTROL ASPECTS.

12. BASED ON RESULTS THIS INITIAL MEETING USDEL RECOMMENDS US CONSIDER MAINTAINING CONTINUING INTEREST IN AND SUPPORT OF PROGRAM WITH VIEW TO FURTHER DEVELOPING ITS DETAILS. FINAL DECISION ON NATURE AND EXTENT US ROLE CAN BE REACHED LATER WHEN DETAILED PROGRAM PLAN IS COMPLETED. IT IS EVIDENT, HOWEVER, THAT PROGRAM IS PRIMARILY EUROPEAN ONE AND THAT US ROLE IN EARLY STAGES WILL LIKELY BE MORE THAT OF A CONTRIBUTING OBSERVER THAN A FULL SCALE PARTICIPANT. IN THIS REGARD, IT WOULD APPEAR THAT US CAN BENEFIT FROM PROGRAM WHICH COULD EXPAND OUR LIMITED KNOWLEDGE OF LONG RANGE AIR POLLUTION TRANSMISSION, PARTICULARLY WITH EXPECTED UPCOMING SHIFT FROM OIL

TO COAL IN US. ADDITIONALLY, SINCE US HAS SOME LONG RANGE TRANSMISSION EXPERIENCE IN OZONE AND IS MORE ADVANCED THAN EUROPEANS IN HEALTH EFFECTS, WE CLEARLY HAVE SOMETHING TO GIVE. PROGRAM ALSO APPEARS OFFER GOOD PROSPECT TO INSPIRE EUROPEAN COOPERATION IN AIR POLLUTION MONITORING WITH POSSIBILITY OF DRAWING EASTERN EUROPEANS IN. IN SUCH CASE, US COULD PROFIT BY BEING ON HAND TO SEE THAT METHODS AND MEASUREMENTS ARE STANDARDIZED AND COMPATIBLE WITH OURS.

13. IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING, BEFORE PROGRAM CAN BE ACCEPTED, TECHNICAL ASPECTS WILL NEED FURTHER ELABORATION AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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PROGRAM WILL HAVE TO GAIN SUPPORT OF GOVERNMENTS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS. SOME INITIAL PROBLEMS IN THIS RESPECT ARE OUTLINED IN PARAS 8-11. USDEL BELIEVES ONE MEANS TO FURTHER PROGRAM NOW MIGHT BE FOR APPROPRIATE ECE ORGAN TO TAKE NOTE OF NORWEGIAN INITIATIVE, EXPRESS INTEREST AND ENCOURAGE NORWEGIANS, ACTING PERHAPS IN PILOT COUNTRY CAPACITY, TO DEVELOP DETAILS IN COOPERATION WITH OTHER INTERESTED COUNTRIES FOR LATER CONSIDERATION BY ECE. THIS WOULD PERMIT DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNICAL DETAILS AND HOPEFULLY AT SAME TIME PROVIDE TIME TO DRAW IN EASTERN EUROPEANS. BY THEN, MOMENTUM OF CSCE DISCUSSIONS MAY BE ESTABLISHED AND, IF PROGRAM IS TECHNICALLY SOUND, IT MIGHT ACHIEVE NECESSARY POLITICAL BACKING.
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